

**THE DETERMINANTS OF LONG AND MEDIUM
HAUL INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS' LENGTH
OF STAY IN MALAYSIA**

by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|---|
| ETP | Economic Transformation Programme |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| NKEA | National Key Economic Areas |
| UNWTO | United Nation World Tourism Organisation |
| CNN | Cable News Network |
| CAGR | Compound Annual Growth Rate |
| GNI | Gross National Income |
| TPB | Theory of Planned Behaviour |
| TRA | Theory of Reasoned Action |
| MICE | Meeting, Invention, Conference and Exhibition |
| 4Ps | Product, Price, Place, and Promotion |
| EPP | Entry Point Projects |
| KLCC | Kuala Lumpur City Centre |
| DEFRA | Department of Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs |
| SIA | Senai International Airport |
| PIA | Penang International Airport |
| KLIA | Kuala Lumpur International Airport |

| | |
|------|-------------------------------------|
| KKIA | Kota Kinabalu International Airport |
| PH | Proportional Hazard |
| LR | Likelihood-Ratio |
| AIC | Akaike Information Criterion |
| SD | Standard Deviation |
| MM | Marketing Mix |
| SN | Subjective Norm |
| AA | Attitude |
| PBC | Perceived Behavioural Control |
| Nobs | No of Observation |

PENENTU TEMPOH TINGGAL DALAM KALANGAN PELANCONG ANTARABANGSA DARI JARAK JAUH DAN SEDERHANA DI MALAYSIA

ABSTRAK

Pelancongan menjadi penyumbang penting kepada ekonomi Malaysia. Walau bagaimanapun, masalah sebenar yang perlu diberi perhatian adalah pertumbuhan industri pelancongan di Malaysia yang diambil adalah berdasarkan angka kemasukan pelancong yang tiba di Malaysia dan bukan jumlah pelancong yang menginap. Perkara ini telah dikenalpasti dengan melihat purata tempoh penginapan pelancong yang rendah. Pelancong yang menetap lama di sesebuah destinasi semestinya akan melawat lebih banyak tempat dan menjana lebih banyak pulangan kepada peniaga tempatan berbanding pelancong yang tinggal dalam tempoh yang pendek. Teori tingkah laku yang terancang telah digunakan untuk memahami faktor penentu tempoh penginapan pelancong. Secara spesifik, tesis ini bertujuan mengkaji kesan campuran pemasaran, sikap, norma subjektif, dan kawalan tingkah laku terhadap tempoh penginapan pelancong di Malaysia. Kajian ini juga bertujuan untuk mengenalpasti impak pemasaran yang mempengaruhi pembentukan sikap ke arah tempoh penginapan dan menyiasat kesan '*moderator*' daripada kumpulan umur yang berbeza serta jarak perjalanan terhadap penentu tempoh penginapan di Malaysia. Oleh itu, tiga hipotesis telah diutarakan. Analisis kesahihan dan kebolehpercayaan awal kajian rintis dengan 55 responden telah dilakukan menggunakan perisian Stata14.2. Selepas kajian rintis dilaksanakan, soal selidik telah digunakan untuk pengumpulan data akhir dengan mendapatkan 384 responden di lima lapangan terbang antarabangsa Malaysia. Analisis

deskriptif dan analisis '*survival*' digunakan dan penemuan tesis telah mendedahkan bahawa teori tingkah laku yang terancang adalah paling tepat untuk digunakan bagi meramal tempoh penginapan pelancong antarabangsa di Malaysia dan cadangan keperluan yang merangkumi halangan atau keadaan dalam penentuan tempoh penginapan. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa hubungan di antara campuran pemasaran dan sikap adalah lebih penting daripada pembolehubah bebas ke atas tempoh penginapan. Selain itu, hubungan '*moderator*' umur dan jarak perjalanan juga terbukti dan penemuan ini amat penting bagi para pemasar destinasi dari segi segmentasi pasaran dan dalam merekabentuk campuran pemasaran. Implikasi teoretikal dan praktikal kajian turut dibincangkan diikuti dengan batasan penyelidikan dan cadangan penyelidikan di masa depan.

THE DETERMINANTS OF LONG AND MEDIUM HAUL INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS' LENGTH OF STAY IN MALAYSIA

ABSTRACT

Tourism is becoming an increasingly important contributor to the Malaysia economy. However, it has been acknowledged as a problem that the growth of tourism industry in Malaysia is due to tourist arrivals but not the receipt per arrival. This is because lower average length of stay. Tourists who stay at one destination longer means visit more attractions and generate more businesses for the destination. The theory of planned behaviour was used to understand the determinant factors of tourists' length of stay in Malaysia. To be exact, this thesis aims to study marketing mix, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control toward the formation of tourists' length of stay in Malaysia. It also aims to identify the impact of marketing mix on the formation of attitude and investigate the moderate effects of different age groups and travel distance on these determinants toward the length of stay in Malaysia. Three main hypotheses were outlined. A pilot study with 55 respondents was performed using Stata14.2 software to ensure the validity and reliability of the proposed test model. After the pilot study, the revised questionnaire was used in the final data collection with 384 respondents at five Malaysia International Airports. Descriptive analysis and survival analysis were applied and the thesis findings revealed that the theory of planned behaviour was better in predicting international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia. The results showed that mediated relationship of marketing mix and attitude was generally much more important than as independent variables toward length of stay. On the other hand, moderated relationship of age and travel distance was also proven and this finding was crucial to destination marketers in term of market

segmentation and in designing marketing mix. The theoretical and practical implications of the study were discussed followed by research limitation and future direction.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Malaysia government intends to transform the tourism sector into a high-yield industry through Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) by 2020 (Performance Management & Delivery Unit (PEMANDU), 2010). Tourists' length of stay is a total time that tourist stay at a destination. It is crucial for Malaysia to implement ETP because ETP is beneficial to the tourism income. Understanding factors that affect and influence tourists' length of stay could increase the chance of achieving the ambitious growth target of ETP. This chapter provides a general outline as shown in the following: research background, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, research hypothesis, and the definition of key terms and finally the organisation of the thesis.

1.2 Revving Up the Malaysia Tourism Industry

Since 1970s, tourism development in Malaysia has steadily grown from an alternative sector to become a major contributor to the national economic structure (Marzuki, 2010). Due to its economic benefits, the tourism industry became an agent for Malaysia's development, especially to the local destination. Tourism development in Malaysia started in 1971 with an allocation of MYR 8.59 million which was provided in the Second Malaysia Plan (1971-1974) (Economic Planning Unit, 1971). This had stimulated the accommodation sector, where the number of hotel rooms increased from

1,900 in 1965 to 6,000 in 1970, and job opportunities in the hotel industry increased from 2,700 to 8,000 job vacancies. In 1980s, the government began to promote the tourism sector aggressively at the global level by allocating a budget of MYR 40 million in the Fourth Malaysia plan (1981-1985) (Economic Planning Unit, 1985).

The Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism was set up in 1987 to monitor all aspects relevant to the development of Malaysia's tourism. During the Sixth Malaysia Plan (1986-1990), more funding was allocated for tourism development purpose and this had resulted in the increase of tourists arrival from 2.2 million in 1980 to 7.4 million in 1990 (Economic Planning Unit, 1991). The tourist receipts increased from MYR 729 million in 1980 to MYR 4.18 billion in 1990, however the total yield was still lower than our neighbouring countries such as Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia¹. According to Mohd Saad (as cited in Marzuki in 2010), the lower total yield was due to the fact that majority of the Malaysia's tourists were Singaporeans who came to Malaysia for a day-trip or visited Malaysia for a short-trip holiday. This phenomenon is still happening nowadays.

The major focus of the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006-2010) was to enhance Malaysia as a famous tourism destination in the world while promoting domestic tourism (Economic Planning Unit, 2006). The main purpose of this plan was prioritised in order to achieve sustainable tourism development in Malaysia (Marzuki, 2010). In the Tenth Malaysia Plan (2011-2015), Malaysia has targeted to be one of the top 10 countries in the world in term of global tourist receipts (Bhuiyan, Siwar, & Ismail, 2013; Economic Planning Unit, 2013). In 2014, the tourism industry contributed

¹ Refer to figure 1.1

significantly to Malaysia's economy by generating higher output, better income, higher employment rate as well as adding value to Malaysia via country recognition.

Tourism industry is the second largest foreign exchange earner after the manufacturing sector in Malaysia (Mazumder, Ahmed, Al-Amin, Nurul, & Mazumder, 2009). According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2017), the total contribution of travel and tourism to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was MYR167.5 billion, which made it the second main contributor (13.7 % of GDP) in 2016; and the number is projected to rise by 4.2 % in 2017 and by 5.4 % per annum; to MYR295.6 billion by 2027. The tourism industry is not only beneficial to the growth of GDP, but it also helps to generate more job opportunity. In 2016, travel and tourism contributed to 12 % of the total employment, with a total of 1,700,500 jobs, which included occupations indirectly supported by the tourism industry. (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017).

Tourist expenditure on accommodation, foods and beverages, tourist activities, local transportation, and others, are important toward the economy of the host country (Nair, Chiun, & Singh, 2014). It generates source of income, employment, business opportunities and foreign exchange and tax revenues. Therefore, in 2010, Malaysia government has structured the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) to develop and transform Malaysia into a high yielding nation by 2020 (PEMANDU, 2010). The Eleventh Malaysia Plan (2016-2020) is implemented together with the ETP towards realising the Vision 2020.

ETP is a strategic plan to develop the nation's economy based on the selected National Key Economic Areas (NKEA). Malaysia government has set a sight on the target of 2020/36/168, i.e. In 2020, Malaysia targets to achieve 36 million tourist arrivals and MYR\$ 168 billion tourist receipt (PEMANDU, 2010, p. 317), through the 12 entry point projects across five themes to increase the tourism receipts. The five themes are: (1) affordable luxury; (2) nature adventure; (3) family fun; (4) events, entertainment, spa and sport; (5) business, tourism and cross theme projects to attract medium- and long-haul tourists by offering tourism products with a better quality.

The tourism receipts in Malaysia have been increasing since 1980s via the massive influx of tourist arrivals but not the receipt per arrival (PEMANDU, 2010). The main reason for this is the lower average tourist's length of stay. Short trip duration refers to one's visitation to a particular destination with limited time spend availability, which could possibly lead to lower spending, especially in the accommodation sector (Alegre & Pou, 2006). Other than that, as mentioned before, Malaysia is highly dependent on tourists from the short-haul markets who are probably day-trippers (i.e. who visits Malaysia from his/her home and returns home on the same day) or weekend travellers (i.e. who visit a destination on weekend). This is also the main reason for ETP's existence because the entry point projects are purposely developed to attract the medium- and long-haul tourists who are more likely to stay longer in Malaysia. Thus, it will enhance the probability of achieving the targeted tourist receipts by identifying the determining factors of length of stay for both medium and long-haul tourists. The study's outcome can be used as a guideline in designing marketing strategy to prolong medium and long-haul tourists' length of stay in Malaysia.

1.3 Problem Statement

Tourism is not merely becoming an increasingly important sector to the Malaysia economy, but it is also a major contributor to the world economy (Hanafiah & Harun, 2010; Nair et al., 2014). According to UNWTO (2015), the international tourist arrivals have been experiencing continuous growth from 25 million globally in 1950 to 1133 million in 2014. Likewise, the international tourism receipts earned by the destinations worldwide have surged from US\$ 2 billion in 1950 to US\$ 1245 billion in 2014. The market share of emerging economies increased from 30 % in 1980 to 45 % in 2014, and it is expected to reach 57 % by 2030, equivalent to over 1 billion international tourist arrivals (UNWTO, 2015). Hence, UNWTO (2015) highlighted that, by UNWTO region, the strongest arrival is prospected coming from Asia and the Pacific with an increment from 4 % to 5 %.

Malaysia is recognised globally as one of the most popular tourism destinations. The capital city, Kuala Lumpur was ranked in 8th top destination cities by the international overnight visitors in 2015 (CNN, 2015; Harjani, 2015). Despite the industry's strong historical growth in Malaysia, it has been depending on tourist arrivals predominantly rather than relying on tourist receipts per arrival (Performance Management & Delivery Unit (PEMANDU), 2010). Dependence on this could be translated into heavy reliance on mass tourist arrivals, especially from the neighbouring countries (e.g. Singapore, Thailand, Brunei and Indonesia) given their higher frequency of visits. Mass tourism means to focus on quantity rather than quality or yield, and this type of tourism carries two main concerns: (i) high dependence on neighbouring countries for low yield tourists; and (ii) carrying capacity of the tourism

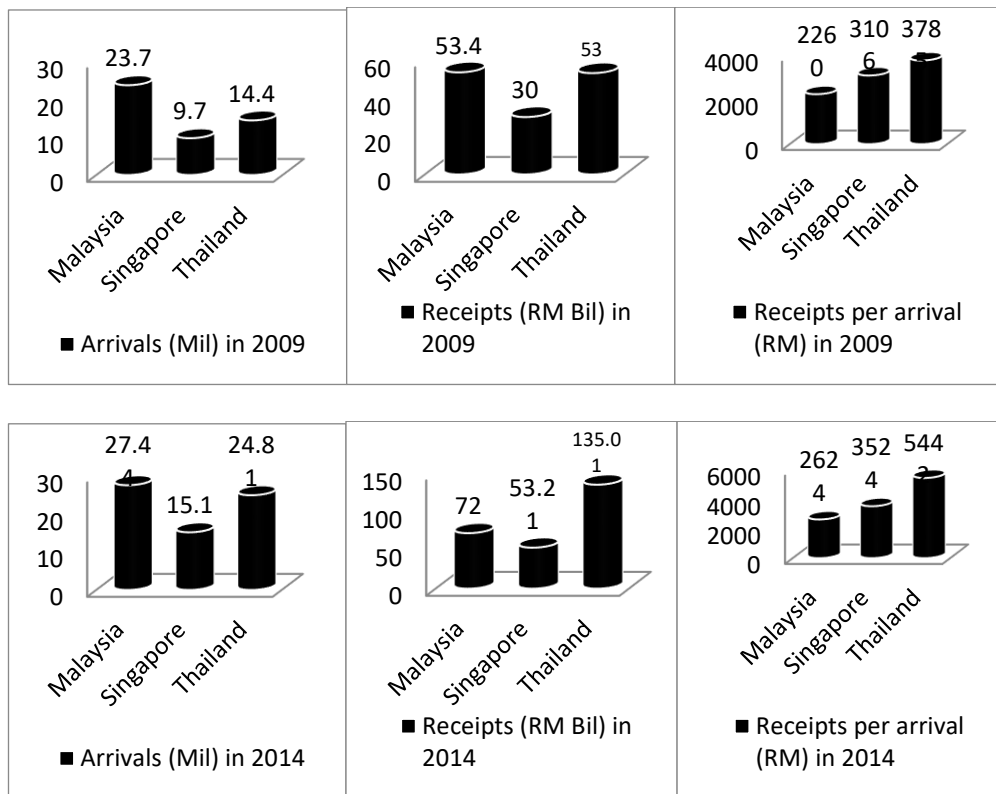
destination to accommodate a mass influx of tourists before compromising the quality of products or services offer, which is opposed to the concept of sustainable tourism.

PEMANDU (2010, p. 320) discovered that Malaysia's tourism growth in inbound receipts is driven by growth in arrivals, not yields. According to the tourism statistics, in 2009, 75% of Malaysia's growth was due to the increase of tourist arrivals compared to only 25 % growth from yield. PEMANDU (2010) compared the Malaysia's Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of receipts growth, arrivals growth, and receipts per arrival growth in five years (2004-2009) to its neighbouring countries; data showed that Singapore and Thailand were growing in a more balanced manner. Singapore's growth in arrivals (65%) and in yield (35%) while Thailand's growth in arrivals (42%) and in yield (58%) (Department of Tourism Thailand, 2016; Ministry of Tourism & Culture of Malaysia, 2015; Singapore Tourism Board, 2016). Tourist arrivals in Malaysia can be segmented as follow: 78% came from the short-haul market, 15 % from the medium-haul market and the remaining 7 % came from the long-haul market². It was learned that 43 % of tourist arrivals in Singapore were from medium-haul market, while 36 % of arrivals in Thailand were from the long-haul market (PEMANDU, 2010). Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Singapore, and Bangkok, Thailand were listed as three of the top 10 cities visited around the world in 2017 (Independent, 2018).

The comparison of tourism statistical data among the countries (Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand) is presented in figure 1.1. During 2009-2014, Malaysia's

² Short-haul tourist from Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam; Medium-haul tourist from China, India, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Japan, South Korea, Australia; Long-haul tourist from United Kingdom, France, Germany, Netherlands, Russia.

tourism growth was in balance, with 50% of arrivals growth and yield growth, respectively. This outcome might be resulted from implementation of ETP in 2010. However, the yield per tourist in Malaysia was still relatively low at MYR 2624 compared to MYR 3106 in Singapore and MYR 3785 in Thailand. PEMANDU (2010) elicited the reasons of this loss which includes lower average length of stay, lower spend per day, and reliance on arrivals from short-haul markets. Therefore, Malaysia Government desires to focus on receipt per tourist rather than relying on the growth of tourist arrivals. One of the crucial variables to increase the receipt per tourist is to prolong the average length of stay.



| Country | Tourist arrivals growth CAGR 2009-2014 (Weight %) | Receipts growth CAGR (2009- 2014) | Receipts per arrival growth CAGR (2009-2014) (Weight %) |
|-----------|---|---|--|
| Malaysia | 3% (50) | 6% | 3% (50) |
| Singapore | 9% (75) | 12% | 3% (35) |
| Thailand | 12% (57) | 21% | 8% (43) |

Figure 1.1 The comparison of tourist arrivals, tourist receipts, and receipts per arrival (2009-2014) among the countries

Source: (Department of Tourism Thailand, 2016; Ministry of Tourism & Culture of Malaysia, 2015; Singapore Tourism Board, 2016)

Tourists who stay in one destination with a longer duration could contribute to the generation of businesses (especially the accommodation sector) at a particular tourism destination, compared to tourists who stay for a shorter period. The trip duration is one of the key holiday characteristics in the tourist decision-making process

(Decrop & Snelders, 2004; Gokovali, Bahar, & Kozak, 2007). In the holiday decision-making process, tourists weight up the benefits of different vacation alternatives, and it was found that financial and time constraints are often taken into consideration (Alegre, Mateo, & Pou, 2011; Alegre & Pou, 2006). For instance, the cost of each alternative and the length of stay they can afford to reserve and pay for.

In the previous literature, a number of researchers have demonstrated the determining factors of tourist expenditure at the destination (Agarwal & Yochum, 1999; Cannon & Ford, 2002; Fredman, 2008; Garín-Muñoz & Montero-Martín, 2007; S. Jang & Ham, 2009; Saayman & Saayman, 2006; Stynes, 1997; Vaughan, Farr, & Slee, 2000; Y. Wang, Rompf, Severt, & Peerapatdit, 2006). However, compared to financial issue, length of stay at the destination has received limited attention and was studied by Joaquin Alegre, Mateo, & Pou, 2011; Joaquín Alegre & Pou, 2006; Alén, Nicolau, Losada, & Domínguez, 2014; Barros, Butler, & Correia, 2010; Barros & Machado, 2010; Gokovali, Bahar, & Kozak, 2007; Martínez-Garcia & Raya, 2008; Peypoch, Randriamboarison, Rasoamananjara, & Solonandrasana, 2012; Thrane, 2012.

The tendency – reduction of the average stay at the destination in favour of shorter trips taken more often throughout the year (Alén et al., 2014) – is supported by business travellers (Yang & Liu, 2003) and low-cost flights (Martínez-Garcia & Raya, 2008). According to Martínez-Garcia and Raya (2008), the trend toward shorter length of stays in Spain was associated with a reduction in tourists expenditure, the total expenditure was remained as a result of a greater influx of tourists. This is the same goes with the case of Malaysia. Alén et al. (2014) advised that it is necessary to undertake an in-depth analysis in this topic to identify the determining factors which

affect the length of stay. As a result, this could help in destination planning and management to attract travellers to enjoy longer length of stays at the destination.

In previous studies, the variable length of stay is often underpinned to the consumer behaviour theory developed by Lancaster (1966) (e.g. studies of Alegre et al. (2011); Alegre and Pou (2006); Barros and Machado (2010); Gokovali et al. (2007); Martínez-García and Raya (2008)). The economic theory of consumer behaviour postulates that a consumption decision made by an individual aiming to maximise utility, subject to the financial constraints, is given by the basis of price and income (Varian, 2014). However, consumer behaviour theory is not appropriate due to tourists who do not share the same set of factors in their utilitarian function. For example, tourists who prefer short length of stay may differ from those who prefer long vacation. Other than that, this study posits that the length of stay is the decision made by the tourists after some research before the trip start, therefore how many days to stay at a destination reflects their attitude, subjective norm and perceived behaviour control. As a result, Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is proposed and applied in this study.

Tourists' decision-making research has grown exponentially during the past four decades (Quintal, Lee, & Soutar, 2010; Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005). Indeed, numerous theories have been developed and tested in a variety of contexts³. However, no single unifying theory has emerged to explain decision-making and it seems unlikely an individual decision process could be explained using a single decision theory. The decision of length of stay is fundamental and crucial for the purpose of

³ Decision making researches explained in detail in Chapter 2 section 2.3

planning and managing other travel decisions; therefore, the theory of planned behaviour seems to be an appropriate framework in the current research context. The Theory of Planned Behaviour is the extension from the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) and it is widely considered as the dominant attitude-behaviour model (Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005). Ajzen and Driver's (1992) model is used to predict the leisure activity choices and it is able to prove the usefulness of the planned behaviour theory in understanding leisure choice behaviour by relating tourist intention to actual choice behaviour.

The theory of planned behaviour assumes that a causal chain which links the behavioural beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs to the behavioural intentions (Montano & Kasprzyk, 2008). The constructs and their relationships among the model are clearly specified, and measurable (Madden, Ellen, & Ajzen, 1992). This is the strength of this theory, however other factors, such as the demographic and environmental characteristics are assumed to operate through the theoretical constructs and do not independently contribute to explain the likelihood of performing the behaviour. The three major predictor variables of theory of planned behaviour are attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control; with each contributed to the prediction of intentions and perceived behaviour control associated with reported behaviour (Ajzen & Driver, 1992).

These three predictors relate to individual is likely to perform a particular type of behaviour (e.g. how many days to stay at a destination) if they believe such behaviour will lead to an outcome that they value (e.g. satisfying their expectation). Second, the important referents (e.g. friends and families) will value and approve the

behaviour (e.g. travel companion prefers to stay longer), and third they have the necessary resources, abilities and opportunities to perform such behaviour (e.g. recreational money and time) (Lam & Hsu, 2006; Quintal et al., 2010). An attitude is a favourable or an unfavourable predisposition to respond in a consistent way to an object, such as the decision of length of stay at a particular destination (Barros & Correia, 2007; Moutinho, 1987). Subjective norms is how much an individual attach to the reference groups' endorsements and the one's willingness to comply these reference groups' suggestion, like the decision of how many days to stay at a destination (Moutinho, 1987; Quintal et al., 2010). Perceived behavioural control is a measure of the difficulty to perform the behaviour, for instance non-volitional control - travel budget and time constraints that determine length of stay (Lam & Hsu, 2006; Montano & Kasprzyk, 2008).

Moreover, this planned behaviour model has been successfully tested in a wide range of contexts, disciplines, and countries, including the tourism and hospitality sectors (Cheng & Hsu, 2006; Han, Hsu, & Sheu, 2010; Lam & Hsu, 2006; Quintal et al., 2010; Sparks & Pan, 2009). Tsai (2010) applied this theory to probe the independent travellers' behaviour. Quintal et al. (2010) integrated the perception, risk and uncertainty into the theory of planned behaviour to examine their relationships in regard to the intention to visit Australia. Han et al. (2010) used the theory of planned behaviour model to explain the formation of hotel customers' intention to visit a green hotel. In addition, Sparks and Wen (2009) investigated that the potential Chinese tourists' values in terms of the destination attribute and attitude toward visiting Australia by adopting the planned behaviour theory. All of the above studies showed that the theory of planned behaviour could explain the tourists' decision better.

Age group (senior and non-senior) and travel distance (long haul and medium haul tourists) are added as moderators into the length of stay framework. According to the United Nations statistical projection analysis, in the year 2050, the share of people aged 60 years old and above will match that of people aged between 0-15 years old. More precisely, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), the world senior population (aged over 60 years old) is approximately 671 million in 2005 and it grew to 900 million (about 34%) in 2015. The older population is expected to reach one billion in 2025 (International Program Center, 2010). “*The ageing index will triple over the next half century.*” (United Nations, 2000, p. 16). The increasing number of senior may lead to compelling demands for changes in the way a society’s resources are shared between the generations (United Nations, 2000), for sure, it also changes the travel preference in the global tourism market.

It is not a surprise that more researchers study ‘senior’ context in the tourism market. The topics related to ‘senior’ include motivation to travel (Hsu, Cai, & Wong, 2007; Jang et al., 2009; Kim, Weaver, & Mcleary, 1996; Muller & O’Cass, 2001), their constraints to travel (Fleischer & Pizam, 2002; Lee, 2005), information sources preference (Kim et al., 1996); travel expenditure (Jang & Ham, 2009), and length of stay (Alén et al., 2014). Majority of studies suggested that non-senior and senior has different travelling pattern. Alén et al. (2014, p. 20) elucidated that if the length of stay is depending on age, a proper trip design in term of number days should be prevalent. If motivations affect the trip duration, the search of factors which can motivate seniors should be a priority; if some destination attributes lead to longer stays, promotion of those attributes should appear above the fold. Therefore, senior and non-senior may

have different preferences in term of trip duration in Malaysia. In other words, the determinants of length of stay may vary between senior and non-senior.

Travel distance in the contexts of recreation and tourism is a well-established research theme since the 1960s (Zhang, Wall, Du, Gan, & Nie, 1999). In the 1980s, distance decay began receiving a lot of attention and applied to variety of recreation and tourism researches (Smith, 1983). Distance decay has been recognised as one of the key laws of geography and it was predicated on the belief that distance exerts a frictional effect on tourism demand (Mckercher & Lew, 2003). This is because travelling requires an investment of time, money, and effort (Rengert, Piquero, & Jones, 1999) which results in a trade-off being made between travel time and time spent at the destination, implying that the travel distance increase, tourism demand will decrease exponentially (Mckercher & Lew, 2003).

There is another thought concerning to the travel distance. Many studies have proven that longer travel distance could stimulate tourists to opt for longer stays (Alegre & Pou, 2006; Bao & Mckercher, 2008; Antonio Gomes De Menezes, Moniz, & Vieira, 2008; McKercher, Chan, & Lam, 2008). This is because the long-haul tourist want to enjoy more days in one destination, in order to make up for the increased overall travel cost; the sum of travel time and on-site time related costs (De Menezes et al., 2008). Another reason why medium- and long-haul tourists are selected as one of ETP objectives is to attract medium- and long-haul tourists to Malaysia; therefore, there is a need to understand these two market segments in regard to the determinants of length of stay in Malaysia. Furthermore, previous studies have focused exclusively on travel from one country to multiple destinations (Graefe & Nyaupane, 2008; Lee,

Guillet, Law, & Leung, 2012); while there are limited research about tourists come from different distances on a single destination (McKercher, 2008). Echoing McKercher (2008), this study provides a new insight toward the medium- and long-haul tourist market.

In addition, one of the current tourism market trends is to do more trips, but reduce the length of stay, throughout the year. Longer stay at a destination may allow tourists to participate in more activities, which increase their overall expenditures, sense of affiliation and satisfaction (Davies & Mangan, 1992a; Antonio Gomes De Menezes et al., 2008). Thus, the length of stay at the destination is a vital variable which determines the tourism experience and the total expenditure of tourists.

However, assessment of this variable is complex, given that the decision on how many days to stay at a particular destination is a part of the multifaceted tourist decision process (Alegre et al., 2011). Therefore, understanding the determinants of length of stay is important to the design of marketing tools to promote longer stays, in regard with higher occupancy rates and revenue streams (De Menezes, Moniz, & Vieira, 2008). Additionally, as mentioned before, the tourism receipts in Malaysia grows continuously due to the massive influx of tourist arrivals but not the receipts per arrival. The main reason for this is the lower average tourist's length of stay. In order to achieve the ETP 2020/36/168 target, it is imperative to identify the determinants of international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia.

1.4 Research Objective

The focus of this study is to analyse and identify factors that determine the international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia.

The study will address the following objectives:

1. To examine the marketing mix, attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control factors which affect the international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia.
2. To identify marketing mix impact on the formation of attitude towards the length of stay in Malaysia.
3. To investigate the moderating effects of different age groups and travel distance on these determinants towards the international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia.

1.5 Research Question

The central question of the research: what are the determinants of international tourist's length of stay in Malaysia?

Within the framework of this central question, further sub-questions are developed as follows:

1. What are the influences of marketing mix, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control toward the international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia?

2. How does marketing mix affect the formation of attitude in term of length of stay in Malaysia?
3. What are the moderating effects of age groups and travel distance on the determining factors of the international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia?

1.6 Research Hypothesis

Based on the presented discussion, hypotheses to be tested are list below:

First Main Hypothesis

H1: Marketing mix, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control positively influence international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia.

Sub Hypothesis

H1-1: Marketing mix positively influences international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia.

H1-2: Attitude positively influences international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia.

H1-3: Subjective norm positively influences international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia.

H1-4: Perceived behavioural control positively influences international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia.

Second Main Hypothesis

H2: Attitude mediates the relationship between marketing mix and international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia

Third Main Hypothesis

H3: Age groups and travel distance moderate Malaysia's marketing mix, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control toward international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia.

Sub Hypothesis

H3-1: Marketing mix, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behaviour control toward length of stay in Malaysia vary between senior and non-senior.

H3-2: Marketing mix, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behaviour control toward length of stay in Malaysia vary between medium- and long-haul tourists.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This thesis studies the determinants of international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia. The respondents are international tourists who have completed their Malaysia trip. The selection of the medium- and long-haul international tourists is explained in Chapter 2 (section 2.6.7, see page 92). The rationale for choosing medium- and long-haul tourists were based on the following reasons: (1) possibility of medium- and long-haul international tourists to stay longer than short-haul international tourists, and (2) one

of the ETP key themes is to attract more medium- and long-haul international tourists to prolong their stay in Malaysia. In order to avoid the sample bias (Wurst, 1955), data collection was done at five Malaysia International Airports, including Penang International Airport (PIA) on Penang Island, Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) in Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Lumpur International Airport 2 (KLIA 2) in Kuala Lumpur, Kota Kinabalu International Airport (KKIA) in Sabah, and Senai International Airport (SIA) in Johor Bahru. The questionnaires were distributed at the departure boarding area and public area. The respondents are tourists who were either coming back to their home country or on the way to another destination. In short, the respondents have completed their holiday in Malaysia and they have confirmed the number of days they stayed in Malaysia.

Three predictors were chosen in reference to Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behaviour. The first criterion was the tourists' attitude toward longer stay; attitude consists of behavioural beliefs and outcome evaluation (Barros & Correia, 2007). More precisely, the outcome points out an assumption: tourist with positive feeling to a destination would be more likely to stay longer. The second criterion is the subjective norm, evaluation of how strong an individual attach to reference groups' endorsements (e.g. friends and families) and one's willingness to comply to their beliefs, attitudes and choices (Moutinho, 1987; Quintal et al., 2010). The final criterion is the perceived behavioural control; it is a measure of the difficulty to perform the behaviour. For instance, non-volitional control - travel budget and time constraints affect length of stay (Lam & Hsu, 2006; Montano & Kasprzyk, 2008). Moreover, travel characteristics were added as constraints which would affect the length of stay, include accommodation, the size of travel group, travel arrangement, and cost or expenditure.

Using these five criteria, the research can provide a better understanding on the determinants of international tourists' length of stay in Malaysia. Another main criterion was added into the framework, which is the tourists' perceptions on the Malaysia marketing mix (tourism products, price, place or channel, and promotion).

1.8 Significant of the Study

Malaysia government has set a target of 2020/36/168 in the strategic plan ETP (PEMANDU, 2010). To achieve this target, Malaysia government needs to persuade tourists to prolong their stay in the tourist destination. Longer stay often comes with higher occupancy rates and increased revenue to the host destination (De Menezes et al., 2008). By studying the international tourists' perception of Malaysia marketing mix, it is envisaged that the findings from this research will contribute to improve the understanding of the existing Malaysia marketing mix and provide indication to future planning for Malaysia tourism marketing efforts and ultimately lead to the increase of average length of stay in Malaysia. These findings can be of use to outline the future planning for tourism companies such as hotel, travel agencies and tour operators in term of their marketing efforts. Furthermore, it is expected that the findings from this research will convince the Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia to consider about restructuring the existing Malaysia marketing plan to attract medium- and long-haul tourists to prolong their length of stay in Malaysia.

Apart from contributing to the industry, this study will also contribute to the development of academia. First, the theory of planned behaviour was tested in the length of stay context, to challenge the Lancaster (1966) consumer behaviour theory

which is often used in previous studies. The reasons of applying the theory of planned behaviour are discussed in Chapter 2 (see section 2.4 page 52). Second, the tourist's perception of the Malaysia marketing mix was integrated into the theoretical framework of length of stay. Nevertheless, this research will also contribute to the research methodology as the survival parametric model was used to analyse the duration data (length of stay, counted in day basis) in Stata software 14.2.

1.9 Definition of Key Term

This terms below will be used widely in this study:

Length of stay

Length of stay is defined as the total time tourist spend at a destination (Botti, Peypoch, & Solonandrasana, 2008). In this study, length of stay refers to the time spent by tourist in Malaysia, calculated from the time of the tourist reach Malaysia until the date they leave Malaysia.

High-yield tourism

The concept of yield can be classified in many different ways (Becken & Butcher, 2004; Dwyer et al., 2006). For example, yield of tourism increases by enhancing tourist expenditures, profits, employment and others. Other than that, Dwyer et al. (2006) explained that additional tourism impacts such as the interest of tourism firms, industry bodies and policy makers should be included, besides, they further argued that the yield is not only applicable to economic or financial variables, social and environmental impacts are also the significant dimension of yield. Tourism yield is related to many aspects such that private sectors will be interested in the impact on its profit and

employment, while the government will be interested in the impact on its profit to Gross National Income (GNI) and total job opportunities offered in the economy as a whole (Becken & Butcher, 2004).

According to Dwyer et al. (2006, p. 4), different stakeholders will emphasise different measures in their marketing and investment strategies (classification see table 1.1), and depending on which measure is concerned, the marketing implications may be different. The first type of classification is visitor yield, which is previously defined as visitor numbers (yield = number of visitors) (Northcote & Macbeth, 2006). However, Dwyer et al. (2006) defined that the visitor yield is not the number of visitors per se, but tourist expenditure at the destination. Therefore, this thesis refers tourist yield as visitor expenditure rather than the number of tourists. The high-yield tourism is depending on tourist expenditure, which has been used as a standard shorthand measure of tourism yield (Dwyer & Forsyth, 1997).

Table 1.1 The yield measurement

| Yield measure classifications | Variables |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Demand side measure | Visitor yield |
| Expenditure measure | Yield as expenditure per trip or by night associated with different market segments |
| Financial measures | <i>Firm level yield</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts on firms' profits, employment, output and others <i>Industry level yield</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry profitability <i>Economy wide yield</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Gross Operating Surplus |
| Economic impact measure | <i>Industry level yield</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry value added or employment <i>Economy wide yield</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross Domestic product or employment |
| Sustainability measure | <i>Industry level yield</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triple Bottom Line reports <i>Economy wide yield</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable development |

Source: (Dwyer et al., 2006)

Travel expenditure

Tourism expenditure is defined by UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (2010) as the amount paid for the acquisition of consumption goods and services, as well as valuable, for own use or to give away, for and during tourism trip. Tourism consumption expenditure is related to the tourism demand (Internatioanl Workshop on Tourism Statistics, 2006). Travel expenditures can be encapsulated into several categories: (1) package travel; (2) accommodation; (3) foods and beverages; (4) transportation; (5) recreation, culture, and sporting activities (e.g. entry ticket); and (6) shopping. In this study, travel expenditure refers to the total amount of tourist expenses during the trip in Malaysia.

Marketing mix

Many practitioners and academics apply marketing mix paradigm and this framework became the prevalent and indispensable ingredient of marketing theory and operational marketing management (Constantinides, 2006). In early 80's, Booms and Bitner (1981) identified the product differences between tangible and intangible products that requires a different type of marketing mix for service marketing. Price is the money value charged for the product's consumption. According to Kotler, Keller, and Hansen (2016), price can influence consumers' demand as they compare the price to make purchase decision.

Promotion is a form of marketing communication that consists of sales, promotion, advertising, public relations, direct marketing, and personal selling (Dolnicar & Ring, 2014). Destination promotion is the development of communicating channels with clientele and other stakeholders to increase awareness and persuade to

purchase products (Buhalis, 2000). Place is distribution channels that connect the producer and the end user. In tourism, the task of distribution is to bring the customer to the service system (Ciriković, 2014) and the information distributed to the tourists is playing an important role. The marketing mix which is used throughout the thesis is 4Ps: Price, Product, Place, and Promotion; which proposed by McCarthy (1964).

Tourists' attitude toward longer stay

Attitude means a settled way of thinking, opinion or feeling about someone or something, which typically reflected in a person's behaviour (Cambridge, 1994). Attitude in this study is defined as the feelings and behavioural belief toward longer stays. The measurement of feelings and beliefs are consisting of bad/ good, interesting/ boring, worthless/ valuable, unpleasant/ pleasant, unenjoyable/ enjoyable, and undesirable/ desirable.

Subjective norm

Subjective norm is 'the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour' in question (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norms evaluate how important is the referent groups' suggestion towards an individual and one's motivation to comply to these groups, with whom same beliefs, attitudes and choices are shared (Moutinho, 1987; Quintal et al., 2010).

Perceived behavioural control

Perceived behavioural control is a measure of the difficulty to perform the behaviour, for instance non-volitional control - travel budget and time constraints affect trip duration (Lam & Hsu, 2006; Montano & Kasprzyk, 2008).

Senior and non-senior tourist market

According to studies on senior and non-senior travellers, age 50 demarcated the two cohorts for comparisons (Bentley, Macky, & Edwards, 2006; Blazey, 1987; Leventhal, 1997). Therefore, in this study, senior tourist refers to the international tourist who aged 50 years old and above, those aged between 18 to 49 years old is categorised as non-senior tourist.

Medium- and long-haul tourist market

Tveteras and Roll (2011) categorised the short-, medium- and long-haul tourist market according to tourist arrivals from different origin of residence in Peru. Similar method was applied in this study, with reference to the number of international tourist arrivals in Malaysia. The distance between 2382km to 5908km to Malaysia is defined as medium-haul tourists whom come from Northeast Asia (Taipei, China, South Korea, and Japan) and South Asia (Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Iran, and Oceania (Australia). The distance of 8871 km and above is defined as long-haul tourists whom come from North Europe (Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, United Kingdom, and Ireland), West Europe (Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Netherland, Belgium, and France) and North America (USA and Canada).

1.10 Organisation of thesis

The thesis consists of five chapters structured as follows:

Chapter One

Chapter 1 introduces the tourism development plan in Malaysia, especially ETP and its target which is highly related to tourists' length of stay in Malaysia. This chapter